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February 20, 2013

Representative Toni Walker, Co-Chair
Senator Toni Harp, Co -Chair
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 0616

RE: S.B. 8 – Increase in Compensation for Magistrates

Dear Co-Chairs,

After I spoke at last night's public hearing, Representative Walker asked me to present my comments to you in written form.

I am the President of the CT magistrates Association and a magistrate for over 10 years. The Association supports this bill, submitted by Senator Crisco for an increase in compensation for Magistrates hearing Small Claims and Traffic Court matters.

In **1983**, the compensation for magistrates was set at \$150 per day. There has been no increase in 30 years.

For us, it has been an honor and privilege to serve, a way to give back and to assist the judicial system. However, no adjustment for 30 years conveys

a lack of respect for our service. Additionally, we do not receive either a mileage allowance or get reimbursed for parking or receive any other benefits.

Since the jurisdictional limit has been increased to \$5,000.00, Magistrates are now required to write complete decisions in Small Claims disputes. We are now hearing cases that would have been in Superior Court (personal injury, employment, breach of contract, etc.)

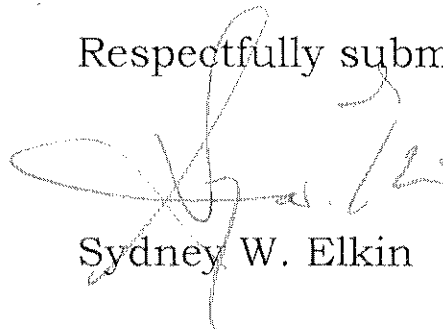
Using the government calculator, \$150 in 1985 is the equivalent of \$70.30 in 2012 or \$320.07 in 2012 is equal to \$150.00 in 2012.

We are requesting an increase to \$300 per day, which I calculate to cost an additional \$112,500.00 (average sessions per week = 15, times 50 weeks (subtracting state holidays), times an additional \$150.00).

For over 85% of the public that comes to Court, we are the fact of the judicial system. We oversee or review approximately 150,000 matters in the course of the year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sydney W. Elkin', is written over a faint, larger signature that is partially obscured.

Sydney W. Elkin